

UNITY

Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion.

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UNITY.

Senior Editor: JENKIN LLOYD JONES.
Associate Editors: WILLIAM C. GANNETT,
FREDERICK L. HOSMER, JOHN C. LEARNED,
HENRY M. SIMMONS, JAMES VILA BLAKE,
JAMES G. TOWNSEND, D. D., MRS. ELLEN T.
LEONARD, JOHN R. EFFINGER, MRS. CELIA
PARKER WOOLLEY, MRS. EMMA ENDICOTT
MAREAN.

Office Editor: MISS BELLE L. GORTON.

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Editorial.

$$1260 + 55 = 1315.$$

"ONE sovereign remedy against all misfortunes is constancy of mind," says Seneca.

THE new combined Hymn book, noticed in *UNITY* of April 13, is now ready for delivery. Churches in need of new books will please correspond with Mr. M. Leonard, Hyde Park, Ill.

SPEAKING of the benefits of the study of comparative theology, Frances Power Cobbe says, "To hold by the full cord of all the faiths of all the ages is assuredly far more secure than to cling by a single thread, even if that thread be the golden strand of Christianity."

LORD HALIFAX said of the ritualistic dissension in the English Church: "No one denies the existence of anomalies among us, but experience has shown that it is safer, as things are, to leave them to settle themselves, than to endeavor to remove them by recourse to Parliament." Oftentimes arbitration begins by being just a little arbitrary.

In a sermon on "Conflicts of Conscience," Rev. M. J. Savage makes a needful distinction between the conventional and the natural conscience. One may have a good deal of the first along with very deficient moral insight and courage. "Do not allow yourselves to think you are virtuous because you can think of yourselves as very conscientious."

If it be good to get "love" in a letter, it is hardly less good to find a great thought slipped in, in place of

other greeting. It is mind calling unto mind across the miles. A word thus sent from the orange groves in Florida, and from one who "makes it a rule to give away one tract each day," shall be passed on: "I believe that, while we are in this world, our whole duty is here; that if after death we find ourselves in another world, our whole duty will be there; and that the best possible way to prepare ourselves for some other world is to do all we can for the betterment of this."

A WRITER for the *Woman's Journal* describes the Swedish system of wood-working, which is called "Sloyd," and introduced into this country by Mrs. Quincy Shaw. The Swedes are a more advanced people in this and some of the other arts than is generally supposed. "Sloyd" is one of the regular branches in the public schools. "It is different from and superior to carpentry, the models ranging from simple designs made with the knife, to those requiring niceness of perception and a number of tools in finishing." The left hand is used as well as the right. The writer recommends "Sloyd" as a new occupation for women, in whom experience and trained instruction will develop as much skill and talent in the use of the gauge, knife and plane as of the needle.

A MISSIONARY at Sierra Leone, writing to the *Christian Recorder* finds it no easy task to get the idea of God into the heads of the natives. "I spoke to them about sin; tried to show them what it is in God's sight, and the remedy provided for its removal, the atoning work of Christ. These people—and I think natures in general—look upon sin as between man and man, and not between man and God. Their idea of praying to God is simply to make some gesture and intonation as they see the Mahomedans do." It strikes us that if they are so far advanced as to perceive that wrong acts as between man and man are sin and needing to be repented of, they are well started on the path of the religious life. It is more than we can do in a civilized nation to make men see and obey the divine authority of right. Yet, until they do that, their ideas of God are of no more account to religion than a myth of the Iliad.

THE *Jewish Messenger* deprecates the growth of the mercenary spirit in the synagogue, the sacrifice of principle to business success and yearly balances, and quotes Bishop Huntington's remarks referring to the church. The Bishop says, "That commercial forces are pushing their way into the church is very obvious. This is seen repeatedly in the election of vestrymen. Spirituality seems often no longer the test of a church official; business success, high social position, shrewdness in the conduct of affairs are coming to be considered the more important qualifications for a good vestryman or trustee." It seems to us, however, that there is no cure for this state of things short of a revolution in our ecclesiastical methods. It is the inevitable outcome of our system. We go to work to develop great financial responsibilities—a costly church and worship and missionary enterprises—and then find that without the aid of the best business talent we shall go into bankruptcy. What are we to do? We have only to be grateful to anybody with a fairly reputable character who will take hold and help us out. Nobody claims that this gives us the ideal church. Far enough from it. But it gives the opportunity of pro-

claiming it—and that is a good deal. The trustees and vestrymen, probably, lay no claim to spiritual superiority. That they are as good as the average of the congregation, nobody doubts. And until we have found out how to organize and carry on churches by more spiritual methods, and with less financial strain and worry, there is no help for us, and we shall elect just those men on our executive boards who have the money and the worldly wisdom to pull us through.

THE liberal recognizes what the orthodox religionist cannot—that the deep questions of religion, those touching on the existence of God and the soul, and the origin of man's religious nature are proper subjects of study. Critical analysis is as necessary a factor of religious as of scientific teaching. The human intellect, having thrown off the fetters of authority and tradition, dares to search for causes here as elsewhere. And the result, instead of proving hurtful to the spirit of religious trust and aspiration, is found to promote that spirit. "The lily's perfect charm suffers no abatement from the chemist's analysis of the slime into which it strikes its slender roots," says Frothingham in his *Cradle of Christ*; "the grape of the Johannisberg vineyards is no less luscious because the soil has been subjected to the microscope; the fine qualities of man or woman are the same on any theory—the Bible theory of the perfect Adam, or Darwin's of the anthropoid ape. The hero is hero still, and the saint, saint, whatever his ancestry."

"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."—"Unhappy am I, because this has happened to me? Not so, but happy am I, though this has happened to me, because I continue free from pain, neither crushed by the present, nor fearing the future. On every occasion which leads to vexation, remember to apply this principle: that this is not a misfortune, but that to bear it nobly is good fortune."—"The noble mind is here to teach us that failure is a part of success. A hero's, a man's success is made up of failures,—defeated all the time and yet to victory born."—"Life, like war, is a series of mistakes; and he is not the best general who makes the fewest false steps. He is the best who wins the most splendid victories by the retrieval of mistakes. Forget mistakes; organize victory out of mistakes."—Four men have said it well: which one says it best? The Roman Stoic, Marcus Aurelius, or the heathen Chinese, Confucius, or the Episcopalian preacher, Robertson, or the unchurched, all-churched Emerson? And which says which,—can the reader fit the sayer to his word?

MR. SMALLEY, writing to the *New York Tribune* about Mr. John Bright, says he was a unique figure in London society, which at one time held aloof from him, but was afterwards glad to recognize the honor of his presence in the drawing-rooms of the great and fashionable. Indifferent to the social world at one time he afterwards became genuinely, though not deeply interested in it, and would accept invitations to dinner. It is said "there was no courtier personage than this Quaker, none whose manners were more perfect." But he had not that false idea of courtesy which forbids the expression of frank opinion, even at risk of spoiling some of the conventions, as the following anecdote illustrates: "In

the days of Mr. Gladstone's earlier unpopularity—for society had prejudices against him long before he took home-rule in hand—Mr. Bright was once dining at the same table with a certain princess. Her royal highness made a remark disparaging to the liberal leader. Mr. Bright turned to her gravely. 'May I ask you, ma'am, have you any children?' 'Yes; why do you ask?' 'Let me beg of you, ma'am, to take them at the first opportunity where they may see Mr. Gladstone. When they see him, say to them that he is the Englishman whom God has permitted to do greater service to his own country than almost any other in his time.'

"*As others see us.*" The Boston correspondent of the *Advance* says the Unitarians of our Athens are "evidently losing ground," though still quite a power. "There are no successors to Doctor Channing, Doctor Ellis, Doctor James Freeman Clarke, Doctor Lathrop." Among the present incumbents of our pulpits there, it mentions Doctor Edward Everett Hale "as the choicest survival of the last generation," and Mr. Savage, who is "built on an entirely different pattern." This amusing writer refers to the recent meeting of the Unitarian Club at which one speaker "boasted" that the Clubs valuation was between \$40,000,000 and \$50,000,000. And then somehow, "Almost invariably the Governor of the State is a Unitarian. The Mayor of Boston, when he is not a Catholic, is very likely a Unitarian." Forty or fifty years ago Theodore Parker was asking, "Where are the great ministers of Boston?" even while those whom the correspondent of the *Advance* mentions were alive. "I state the truth (he says) that our ministers are little men; but think not that I blame them. I only mention the fact as one sign of the place and rank which Christianity holds in this time." And yet though the prophets were stoned, religion has survived; and we trust Unitarians will be able to hold the fort and win a eulogy from the next generation.

EDITORIAL WANDERINGS.

The last word the senior editor wrote for *UNITY* readers was from the banks of the Missouri river. Since then, May 4, he has been so pressed with the King's business that he has not had time even to ask for a *UNITY* subscription, much less to think out an editorial. But the dedication of two churches, the laying of a corner-stone of a third, the ordination of a Unitarian minister and that a woman, coming to her work through years of deliberate preparation, and four days in conference room, offer material for reflection and encouragement which our readers must anticipate. The Moline church is cozy as a bird's nest, rational and practical in form as in spirit, and is a splendid witness to the faithful labor and wise planning, not only of the friends at Moline, but of Brother Judy, pastor of the adjoining church at Davenport, without whose labors the church could not have been. The sight of a fully equipped twenty-five thousand dollar church, all paid for, springing into existence upon ground which less than four years ago was, in the vernacular of the west, virgin soil, is the most conclusive answer to the question, Should women enter the ministry? yet offered in history. The vigor of the spiritual movement at Sioux City is inadequately represented by this material triumph. If there has been anywhere between the two

oceans better and more permanent work done for our cause than that done by Miss Safford and her associate, we do not know where it is. The ordination of Miss Elinor E. Gordon to the ministry was an event so full of significance and beauty that it ought to mark an epoch in the history of Unitarianism. Eight ordained ministers were there assembled. The sermon was preached by a woman, the ordaining prayer fell from the lips of a woman, and the consecrations of the hour made the touch of the hand symbolic of an Apostolic succession prospective rather than historical.

It was pleasant to catch a glimpse of the All Souls church of Sioux City and to feel its hopeful beginnings, though there was no time to speak the congratulations we felt. At Rock Rapids a large attendance came out in mid-week to take another lesson in church building. And at Luverne the business of the bright little town must have been largely suspended at mid-day, because the men seemed to be all there listening to the sermon in the hall, which was pervaded with such home-like atmosphere as becomes a Unity movement led by a woman. Then we went out into the open air where little children sang their songs, and with the impressiveness of intense interest and sincerity, under the lead of the pastor, Mrs. Wilkes, the treasures were deposited in the stone by various representative hands of the workers, cemented by her own hand, and the mortar into which the stone finally settled, prepared by the chairman of the Board of Trustees, after which there was another address and prayer of consecration by the itinerant editor. The first deposit in the leaden box was a copy of *UNITY*, placed there by the hand of Mrs. Mahoney, formerly of our Sheffield parish, out of whose warm heart and clear head this Unity church of Luverne took its rise. As *UNITY* was deposited it was said that it was by its inspiration and guiding directions that the new church had been formed.

It was late Saturday when the senior reached home after some twelve hundred miles' travel, four sermons and a great number of addresses given, and much talking. He was weary of brain but strengthened in heart, and the experience of the eight days' absence yielded a sermon to All Souls church Sunday morning which started the endowment fund of the Western Conference with \$3,000 in subscriptions, the account being but begun. It is now Monday morning. The duties of Conference week already press, and we can make no further communication to our readers this week, but we will try to serve them in more profitable ways. May they keep our common cause close to their hearts as we will try to do.

HOW WE RAISE OUR CONFERENCE MONEY.

In trying to tell how we do it, let me begin by telling how we do not do it. We do not do it as one goes through a disagreeable task, pushed off as long as possible, dreaded until it is over and hurried through finally by two or three generous contributions that hide the shortcomings of many. We do not do it as a great favor to the societies which carry on our work for us, nor as if we were bestowing alms on the poor man who sits at the corner of State and Washington streets and harrows our souls. Neither is it done by accident, sandwiched in between other duties and pleasures, as it may happen. Neither is the contribution for the different sides of our denominational work so spread out that a man may be called on for his subscription to the Western Conference in October, and for the American Unitarian Association in November, and for the Illinois Conference in December, and for the Church Building Loan Fund in January, and for the Sunday-school Society in February, and for the Montana Indian School in March, and for the Woman's Conference in April, and for the Western

Conference Guarantee Fund in May, until in June he is ready to forswear all conferences. Just twice in the year is each member of our church asked to acknowledge his obligations. Enterprises may go on at other times to which he may give something if he chooses, but twice in each year a general canvass is made of the society. In January he is supposed to contribute something to the fund which covers the running expenses of the church and the pastor's salary. Then that is finished and one hears no more of it until another January comes around. November is missionary month, set down as such in the church calendar, and at that time every individual member is given the opportunity to contribute something to the conference collection. Thus it comes that although we do give yearly to all the different objects just mentioned, only one collection is taken up for the purpose and the amount raised is divided as seems best. We have taken the month of November as best suited for that purpose. It is a time when people are in the city. It is after the expenses of summer traveling and before the claims of Christmas are upon us. It is an admirable way of working up to the Thanksgiving of the last of the month. It is a good thing for the conferences too to know when they may expect our money, and finally the regularity of the occurrence is a wonderful help to any one who shares in the work. Personal notes must be written, or conversations held with new members, not to press them into giving, but to explain the need and the annual custom. This would be a great tax, were it to be repeated every year, but it is not long before people recognize of themselves the reasonableness of the habit, and as soon as the announcement is made that November subscriptions are in order, the money begins to come in. It seemed a great advance when it began to come even in October with such remarks as "I knew it was almost time for this" and "I don't need any announcement this year."

Again, we do it thoroughly. Even the children in the Sunday-school are taught to feel their obligations to the society which supplies them with lesson helps and song books. We have been educated to feel that if one can give only twenty-five cents, he can at least give that royally and let it stand beside the five or ten dollars of his neighbor. Thus our subscription list holds a long array of names and shows a wide difference in amounts subscribed.

Again, this is a subscription affair, not a contribution. We do not pass round the box or trust to a pleasant day or the chance that pocket books have not been forgotten, in order to secure the right sum. For another thing, we place this subscription in the hands of the same person year after year. She (in our case it just happens to be a woman) will know exactly the proportions and details of each year's subscription list. She will know which man likes to have his money in first and without being notified. She will know which ones always like to wait until a friendly little reminder comes in the shape of a note. She will know when it is best to remember the amount contributed the year before, and when it is wiser to ignore it and take a fresh start. She will be too sensible to tease for money, too dignified to make a jest of it, too thoroughly in earnest to allow the importance of the matter to be ignored. She will hear more friendly words and appreciative remarks than at any other time in the year perhaps, and will finish her November work by consenting to keep her place for another season.

Thus it will be seen that we do not leave the details of such work to the minister. We do ask him to preach a missionary sermon about the first of November, not one telling how poor the conference is, and how much good we can do it, not specific in its appeal but nobly general. He tells us of the opportunities that surround us, of the need for our thought, of the privilege

of giving which is ours, and of the value of an idea. Sometimes he gives some one else a chance to say a word about the more specific needs that press on us. It would be no disparagement of his other sermons to say that this one is the best of the year. That sermon preached, he is not to trouble his head about the rest of it. He has enough to do to furnish the inspiration that calls out good work from others. That is an excellent quality in a minister, to be able not only to work himself, but sometimes to refrain from working and trust something to others.

One thing more. I believe it is more easy to raise the missionary money in our church than it would be if we were not so poor ourselves. We know what it is to want a church home and to be willing to accept money from Maine and California, from the city church and from the "isolated individual" that the Post-Office Mission workers tell us about. It is a sacred obligation to pass on the help we have received, and it has been an object lesson in the interdependence of human relations. We believe that a church should help itself so far as that is possible. While it is helping itself, it should not neglect the outside missionary claims. All the time from its very beginning it should show to itself that it has a reason for being, and no necessity for comfortable chairs or a carpet should interfere with the fulfillment of its duties to others. It is good sometimes to remember how in the very stress of buying our lot, we took up our first conference collection, and that those days which seemed so burdened with doubt and anxiety as to whether the church would have any future at all, yet proved that if it did live, it would live for useful ends.

It may seem as if this were all a glorification of "our church." It is not that, but as many have asked the question "How do you do it?" it has seemed only fair to answer in full, hoping that it may be a help to some.

What can any of us do but wax enthusiastic over the work in which we are interested?

CHRISTIAN AND CHRIST-LIKE.

Two words,—*Christian* and *Christ-like*. Etymologically they should mean the same. But do they? In our common usage has the first equal weight with the second? Are they quite interchangeable? Are the really Christ-like ones recognized as the *Christians* to-day by those who most love the name and habitually use it as an adjective of character? And are those who most appropriate this term of *Christian* to themselves and make it a dividing line of thought and fellowship,—are these found to be above all others the *Christ-like* ones? There is a tendency in words to lose their first force and value and, like current coins, to wear smooth until the original image and superscription are rubbed away. It is most of all so with the highest and noblest words. Their constant and conventional use cheapens their significance,—empties them of their finer values. "All who are Christians now stand up!"—says the professional revivalist and exhorter, in the crowded assembly; and up they get, men and women, as mechanically as if his voice touched a secret spring and moved them like so many puppets. But if he were to use that other word,—"All who are *Christ-like* now stand up!"—ah, would so many rise and so readily? Would not that turn the frequent self-complacency and religiosity of such gatherings into something of that humility which makes for the soul's real health? And if the man were then to say, as usually follows,—"All who *want* to be *Christ-like* now stand up!"—would not this mean somewhat more and present a more vivid and definite ideal of character and conduct than for him to say,—"All who *want* to be Christians"? "Christians" are common. It is become a badge, this name, easily worn. They are made by the score in a week's protracted meeting. But *Christ-like* people,—are these common? Are these

made by theological label and paste? Ah, it means something to be *Christ-like*. It is a great thing to have the testimony of that word worthily given. That word sifts the Christians. That word, like an arrow, penetrates opinions, beliefs, professions, and hits the very heart of character and its expression in life. You know many "Christians." Indeed most of the people you know and daily meet wear this label. How many of them all seem to you *Christ-like*; how many would you call such? How many of them seem to be really of Jesus' high company and spiritual kin, or to suggest him except in the name that is so often and so easily upon their lips?

Fellowship with Jesus by like anointing of the Spirit—that is a noble idea. There is character-making force in that conception. But the popular teaching too much overlooks it. Fleeing to the cross of Jesus, hiding beneath his cross, clinging to that, finding salvation somehow by that,—this is a familiar appeal and a threadbare thought. But salvation by one's own cross, rising into fellowship with him by the bearing of one's own burdens, doing one's own duty, facing one's own peculiar difficulties and disappointments, working out one's spiritual welfare by one's own patient continuance in well-doing under trial and loss and the misjudgment of men,—how often do we find this ideal and interpretation of discipleship? How often is this made the real doctrine of the Cross? And yet this is the doctrine of the Cross; just this is the doctrine of the Cross. Any less interpretation may make men and women "Christians" after an outward way, but it will hardly make them *Christ-like*. For Jesus was a hero as well as a saint. He was a strong man as well as a tender man. It was no borrowed mantle of another's sacrifice and virtue in which he was clad. It was woven of his own inward and outward life,—his soul's vision, his heart's love, his mind's thought, his readiness to do and to suffer, that so through him human life, individual and social, might be made better and happier on this earth. If any man will to come after him, the way is open. The same condition is laid upon all; and the same fountains of inspiration and strength at which he drank flow to-day and forever.

F. L. H.

Contributed and Selected.

THE POETS.

Oh, Poets! You who stand so near
The pearly gates of paradise,
And soar to heights from which the light
Of that secluded realm can fall
Athwart your more than human gaze—
You have been crowned diviner than
The masses of mankind, who see
Alone the present fact, nor rise
Beyond the tangible result
To kiss the magic golden hands
Divine, of a creative Cause.
Frail flesh and blood but ill can solve
The mysteries which gird you 'round
Your speech, oh songful sons, is but
The faint attempt to cry aloud
Of beauties seen through veil of flesh,
By inspiration semi-cleared.
I count you prophets half and half,
Eked out by frail humanity.

EUGENE ASHTON.

RELIGION DEFINED.

It was said of Ben Jonson that he had no sense of natural objects except "such as he could measure with a two-foot rule, or tell upon ten fingers." Similar dullness of perception causes many to think the human heart measurable against slabs of stone; and the mistake may arise as much from ignorance of the stone as from ignorance of the heart. After we have weighed and measured and handled the rock by the wayside, we may the next day pass by to find its substance dissolved and its solidity etherealized; it has evaded our grasp and eluded our vision. We turn to the heart and reverse the experience. After we have abandoned the attempt to grasp and analyze our own emotions, and despaired of penetrating the secrets of human sentiments, we soon

perceive them projected into symbols, crystallized into institutions and modeled in material solidities. In both cases we are liable to mistake the temporary manifestations for the permanent essence. Religion has woven itself into temples, surplices, rituals, popedoms, presbyteries and Bibles. This out-working of the religious sentiment is the formation of religious systems, and weaves a Buddhism, a Taoism, a Judaism; but no one of these, nor all combined, is religion any more than a web is the spider. What "puzzles the will" is to gain any very definite idea of this sentiment which is capable of such elusive and illusory manifestation. I am amenable now for calling religion a sentiment. What may I substitute? Religion is a term without synonym. It is broader than any other applied to human qualities. It is inclusive of the triple manifestations of soul — intellect, emotion, will. It is expressive of an element pervasive of the whole being. It is an influence working through all members, allowing no talent to be buried, which, properly employed, would yield increase, — taxing every subject power to fill up the coffers of the soul, and through all gathering treasure into the exchequer of life. I talk figuratively and indefinitely because language has no value here but that of suggestion. Religion cannot be reduced to the accuracy of an exact science; yet it is no chimera. The elements are permanent, rock is transitory, — "Shall I not be as real as the things I see?"

But, putting aside any hope of saying precisely what is this deepest and broadest element of human nature, I have gathered up from all sides a number of partial statements and aimed to cluster them in such a manner as to afford a tolerably complete definition of religion. And from all combined, we gain the elements of harmony, of justice, of insight, of character, of kindness; of charity and helpfulness; of submission, reverence and faith; of service, forbearance, obedience; of enthusiasm, effort and aspiration, sympathy and love. How many additional elements religion would be found, by complete analysis and enumeration, to contain, I know not; but this I know, that most of the definitions attempted include but one of these qualities, and that no short statement is capable of containing the whole of religion. I am not sure but much better than any attempt to know this deep and subtle emotion second-hand through the prejudice and partial opinions of others, would be even a dull and unskillful analysis of one's own religious dispositions. Certain it is that one element in our religious composition has been overlooked by every statement I have met. They have given it as a relation to God, to the universe and to fellow-man; as an activity and struggle outwards and upwards; but they have in no wise intimated that religion is a quality of self-conscious beings, and that its deepest and highest meaning is understood by only those whom the unfeeling, unfaithful world has bruised and betrayed. Religion is much more the right ordering of one's spirit from within than the attainment of any relations with the outer-world or the upper-world by the perception of principles or the converting of relations into binding laws of life. It is the improving of natural dispositions. It is self-knowledge of the soul, quelling of impulses, quieting of temper, soothing of injured sensitiveness, healing of wounded feelings, consoling of bereavement, sweetening of the spirit. It is that human element which renders all humane who become conscious of its existence. Religion is the amiableness of humanity. "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction," is not religion, but the conduct which religion inspires. "Passionate love for the right, and passionate hatred for the wrong," is not religion, but simply a quick and strong and sensitive conscience. Let us avoid confusing results with their cause. Religion

is not conduct, which is the outcome of religion. Is it not belief in any matters pertaining to religion. And while we may agree that "no man's religion ever survives his morals," we cannot agree that morality is the whole of religion. Were we to restrict ourselves to the fulfillment of moral obligations, we would catch but little of the fragrance of life. Two-thirds of all that makes it beautiful to live consists in the kind doing of trifles for which there cannot well be presented any obligation, for which ethics provides no law. The inspiration to these actions is religion. It emanates a fragrance from the soul and catches up all the beauty of morning sunbeams. It may be judge upon the bench and jury in the box; it is as well courteousness on the street and kindness in the home. "Religion is the most gentlemanly thing in the world," says Coleridge; "it alone will gentilize, if unmixed with cant." It calms the passions, cools the temper, deepens the feelings, balances the conduct, intensifies the life, sweetens the character, and renders all the dispositions amiable. We can more easily say what it does than what it is, because we know more of its effect than of its essence. I believe Bishop Butler, that "religion does not consist in the knowledge and belief even of fundamental truths; it consists in being brought by them to certain temper and behavior." Religion is not perception of principles nor discernment of relations. Religion is not justice, nor reverence, nor faith. It is not character, nor charity, conscience nor conduct; it is neither speculation nor action; neither theology nor morality; neither believing nor doing. It is that subtle influence in the soul which quickens conscience, which inspires conduct and enables character; which awakens and emblazons the intellect, deepens and intensifies the moral sentiments, which renders the disposition buoyant and the spirits lucid, sweetens sorrow and mollifies joy—"A simple, quiet, undescribed, undescribable presence dwelling very peacefully in us, our rightful lord." This is religion.

J. B. FROST.

IT WILL NOT LAST.

A woman who years ago at one blow lost fortune and high social position, and was forced to devote herself in poverty wholly to the care of an imbecile relative, was lately asked how she contrived to retain her courage and cheerful spirits.

"Simply," she said, "by seizing every day upon the little pleasures of life, when the great blessings are denied me. I play chess, I run out for a walk in the country, I look at the pretty things in the shops, I sketch the queer faces I see—I grasp at every scrap of amusement that comes within my reach."

One of Miss Yonge's sensible heroines, when in great trouble, "always kept a good novel in her work-basket, 'for repairs.'" Sidney Smith says somewhere, "Little pleasures conquer melancholy sooner than high and exalted thoughts." This is because the tired brain cannot grasp the high and exalted thoughts.

Total change of base is another most wholesome remedy. If possible, begin life afresh on new conditions. You have lost a wife or son? Go for a time where nothing will recall them. You have been a drunkard, or a criminal? Leave all old acquaintances behind, cut the ground from under your feet; try to believe, in a new scene, and among new faces, that you are a different man, whom nobody knows but God. The new chance for you will become real and possible. Much may be done, too, by a stubborn, downright refusal to be beaten by disaster. "God loves the man that tholes" (endures), says the Scotch proverb. At least you can shut your lips and thole in silence. Don't pose forever on a pedestal of misery to win pity. Your grief was given to you alone to bear. Bear it. Do not shift it on to the shoulders of all who come near you, to add to their burdens.

If you have reached middle age, you

will find help in remembering that the pain or grief, no matter how heavy it may be, will not last. To the boy or girl grief is eternal. The man of fifty knows that he has come through other sloughs to firm land. Firm land lies beyond this slough. But the surest remedy is some hard work for others, not for ourselves. The harder and more exacting it is, the better. Nothing else will so thoroughly drag the sick soul out of its selfish luxury of woe, and restore it to healthy relations with its God and the other souls whom it was sent to help. Jesus wept over Lazarus's death, but he did not lose an hour of his work in weeping. "Let the dead bury their dead," he said to his disciples. "Follow thou Me." — *Rebecca Harding Davis.*

JOHN BROWN.

A writer in the *National Baptist* says of Von Holst's "John Brown": "Dr. Von Holst recognizes the inevitable futility of the effort at Harper's Ferry, while yet he sees in John Brown himself 'a grand, heroic figure.' He presents in striking light the demonstration which Brown made of the weakness of slavery, when a handful of men (not exceeding twenty at the most), many of whom were soon shot down, were able to convulse with terror the whole commonwealth of Virginia.

"The career of John Brown fills one of the most striking pages of our history. This man of scanty education, knowing few books save his Bible (but knowing that very thoroughly in letter and in spirit), possessed of no tact or eloquence, who had failed in every undertaking, and who failed most completely of all in his last and crowning undertaking, yet towers in dignity and greatness far above statesmen and secretaries and presidents. He illustrates the fact that a man who has strong convictions, and who is willing to die for them, and who does not know the meaning of fear, is a man to be dreaded by the powers of evil."

WHY ARE THEY SHUT?

The following stanzas were composed while the author was sitting outside a country church in Sussex, much regretting that, as it was week-day, he could not gain admittance to the sacred edifice.

Why are our churches shut with jealous care,
Bolted and barred against our bosom's
yearning,
Save for the few short hours of Sabbath
prayer
With the bell's tolling steadily returning?

Why are they shut?

If with diurnal drudgeries o'erwrought,
Or sick of dissipation's dull vagaries,
We wish to snatch one little space for thought,
Or holy respite in our sanctuaries,

Why are they shut?

What! shall the church, the House of Prayer,
no more,
Give tacit notice from its fastened portals,
That for six days 'tis useless to adore,
Since God will hold no communings with
mortals?

Why are they shut?

Are there no sinners in the churchless week,
Who wish to sanctify a vowed repentance;
Are there no hearts bereft which fain would
seek

The only balm for Death's unpitying sentence?

Why are they shut?

Are there no poor, no wronged, no heirs of
grief,
No sick, who when their strength or courage
falters,

Long for a moment's respite or relief
By kneeling at the God of MERCY's altars?

Why are they shut?

Are there no wicked, whom, if tempted in,
Some qualm of conscience or devout sug-
gestion

Might suddenly redeem from future sin?
Oh, if there be, how solemn is the question,

Why are they shut?

In foreign climes mechanics leave their tasks
To breathe a passing prayer in their cathedrals:
There they have week-day shrines, and no
one asks,

When he would kneel to them, and count
his bead-rolls,

Why are they shut?

Seeing them enter sad and disconcerted,
To quit those cheering fanes with looks of
gladness—

How often have my thoughts to ours reverted!
How oft have I exclaimed in tones of sadness,
Why are they shut?

For who within a parish Church can stroll,
Wrapt in its week-day stillness and vacation,
Nor feel that in the very air his soul
Receives a sweet and hallowing lustration?

Why are they shut?

The vacant pews, blank aisles, and empty
choir,
All in a deep, sepulchral silence shrouded,
An awe more solemn and intense inspire
Than when with Sabbath congregations
crowded?

Why are they shut?

The echoes of our footsteps, as we tread
On hollow graves, are spiritual voices;
And holding mental converse with the dead,
In holy reveries our soul rejoices.

Why are they shut?

If there be one—one only—who might share
This sanctifying week-day adoration,
Were but our churches open to his prayer,
Why—I demand with earnest iteration—

Why are they shut?

—Horace Smith.

IDLENESS IN THE PRISONS.

The extract, concerning the Yates Law, which we print below, turns upon a local issue but has a universal bearing. The question of prison management is one intimately connected with ethical interests, because the prison should and may be made a school for reform and character building. Only earnest thought and effort will accomplish the desired results.

The Yates Law, of August 2 last, which was the outcome of a special session, forbids using "motive power machinery" in the prisons, forbids contract labor, and forbids selling or giving away the product of any labor. A legislature, of course, intends the natural consequence of its acts. By this rule the Yates Law intends torture, with all involved therein.

* * * * *

But do the people know how the prison officials are secretly trying to nullify the law? At Sing Sing they are exercising the men several hours daily; are making them bathe; are allowing them tobacco; are teaching them to read, and are letting them take books to their cells, having accumulated a library of nearly 8,000 volumes; are winking at a Bible-class which the chaplain is holding semi-weekly—as though these wretches could have any share in Christ and the Bible; and are actually letting 150 of them break stone in advance of need, besides using men unnecessarily in the prison work. Yet the law has accomplished something, despite their efforts. The prison is crowded. Discipline is becoming impaired. The men are deteriorating. They are begging for work, sending by hundreds to the head-keeper with the same old petition—so they are not happy. The best evidence—and the completest work—of the Yates Law is that they are going crazy under it. About a dozen have been sent to the asylum from Sing Sing, and three dozen in all during the last six months, or more than twice the number of the same time in the year previous.

One man in Sing Sing tells the wardens that he was sentenced to labor, and if he doesn't get it he will go to a court, when he gets through, and will find out why. Is not his point good, at least in sense and morals? It should be counted a minor matter that this idleness is directly costing the State \$400,000 a year, as it should be that the prisons can be made to even pay something into the treasury. If the men themselves are not to be considered, we can save trouble and consistency together by making a tight box and smothering them out of the way by gas, which is now produced at a low figure. But if this is really the nineteenth and not the ninth century, let us un-Yates the prisons and sweep away a plan so wasteful, senseless, cruel, cowardly, and abominable that the very stones must soon cry out against.—*Julius Wilcox, in Christian Union.*

NEW YORK.

THERE is more Washington in America now than when he who bore the name stood at the nation's head. There is a thousand times more of Jesus now on the earth than when the Marys stood at his feet.—*Theodore Parker.*

Church-Door Pulpit.

Any church may secure the publication of an acceptable sermon in this department by the payment of \$5, which sum will entitle the church to one hundred copies of the issue in which the sermon is printed.

PERSONALITY IN THE UNIVERSE.

BY REV. ARTHUR M. JUDY.

The Conference Sermon preached at Sioux City, Iowa, May 6th, and published by the Conference.

At the present day the question often arises whether we should speak of God as personal or impersonal. In reply to that question we must notice that language is divided into two sets of terms—the one describing material conditions, the other spiritual experiences. When we speak of God we must choose our terms from one of these two divisions so that the question comes to this: Are the terms which describe material conditions more descriptive of our thought of God than the terms which pertain to spiritual experiences?

Take, for instance, a mountain and call to mind a somewhat scientific description thereof. It consists of granitic rock, veined with ores. In places it is covered with a thick soil on which grow large trees. It lies in longitude so and so, and latitude so and so. At its base flows a river two hundred feet wide. Its summit is dotted with snow in summer. It is thirteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. It affords a view over surrounding mountains. It was probably reared by volcanic action in recent geological times. In terms belonging to the same set, and in the same tone, one might describe the whole known universe. In fact it is just after this manner that technical books of science are written. In the plainest and most precise language they tell how the matter of which the universe is composed, looks, and acts. Now the real question is, Do their technical descriptions of the universe tell its whole story as it appears to man? I do not believe they do. I believe that if we could master the whole of them, we should yet turn away feeling that they had left a great deal unsaid. Take this test. Gray has the following description of the daisy: "Heads many flowered, radiate; rays numerous, pistillate. Scales of the involucrum, herbageous, equal in about two rows. Receptacle conical, naked. Achenia obovate, flattened, wingless, and without pappus. Low herbs." Now I admit that Gray has not exhausted the description of the daisy even from the point of view of strictly material terms. But the real question is, Could he, so long as he keeps strictly to those terms, introduce into his description a different tone? Listen to Burns' description of the same flower and see what I mean.

"Wee modest, crimson-tipped flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem."

"Cauld blew the bitter, biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm;
Scarce reared above the parent earth
Thy tender form."

In this poem Burns makes the flower *sentient*. 'Tis the introduction of that feature which causes the whole difference in tone between his description and Gray's. Re-read the first lines.

"Wee modest, crimson-tipped flower
Thou's met me in an evil hour."

How those words pull at your heart strings! Even for the daisy, there is good and evil, is there?

"To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonnie gem."

And the daisy, then, is a lovable creature, whom we, as a cruel fate, must crush. Again:

"Cauld blew the bitter, biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm."

Brave, cheery, little hero is the daisy, coming forth in storm and cold to gladden the hearts of men. Thus does Burns make the daisy a *brave, cheerful, lovable* creature. In brief he makes it *sentient*. And it is just this

touch of sentiency which brings his poem into universal favor.

Now, the deepest religious question of the day is, shall we or shall we not impart this sentiency into our descriptions of the universe?

Should we make our appeal to literature, to decide this question for us, it would overwhelmingly declare in favor of the sentiency. I doubt if a great book has ever been written which does not personify the sea, the mountain, the storm, the flower, the sky. Take that quality from Shakespeare, and his passages of subtlest power would lose their charm. Take it from Goethe's Faust, and you remove the fundamental implication of the poem. Even the greatest prose writings cannot be deprived of it without being impoverished. It gives life to the pages of George Eliot. It hovers, the creative spirit in Hawthorne's immortal novels. It is the sustaining power in Emerson; comes forward commanding-ly in Franklin; speaks in Washington's farewell address; rules in Lessing and Novalis; is constantly implied in Darwin; and is, of course, the secret of all bibles old and new.

Were literary men required to give a reason for ascribing sentiency to the universe, they would reply, among other reasons, that the universe has no inspirational value except in so far as it is personified. And in proof of their position, they would bid you go read the technical books in which it is described as matter only. Of course in so doing, they would not intend a slur at these technical books. They would even declare that no other sort of language should be admitted into them, because the natural sciences, strictly so-called, should be confined to the investigation of material conditions. But they would urge, that such books can never tell the whole story of the universe as it appears to man, or as it affects man. In the words of Bryant they would maintain that

"To him who in the love of Nature holds Communion with her visible forms, she speaks A various language. For his gayer hours She has a voice of gladness, and a smile And eloquence of beauty; and she glides Into his darker musings with a mild And healing sympathy, that steals away Their sharpness ere he is aware."

I wish to call close attention to these words because men who have ceased to use the name of God, often fall back upon Nature to satisfy certain deep-seated yearnings. In so doing they find that Nature has indeed a "various language." Philosophically and religiously, it is important that we should discover the power by which Nature utters this various speech. Should these men think of Nature in none but material terms, I fear that her voice would be silenced. I suspect that "ere they are aware," they play the poet's part, and ascribe sentiency to her manifold forms and processes. In reading so-called atheistical writings, or in listening to conversations of the same denomination, I am sometimes struck by the reappearance of the old religious sentiment under the cultus of Nature. The word God is no longer used, but the sentiency of God, in some of its highest and subtlest forms, is retained in the new cultus. This tendency shows how difficult it is to free oneself from the belief in God. For after all, what is the essence of the belief in God, if it be not just this belief in the sentiency of Nature?

If Nature "has a voice of gladness;" if she "glides into our darker musings with a mild and healing sympathy," she has done all that God can do for us. *Such relations as are here described are spiritual relations.* And if these true heart-relations can be established between Nature and Man, the conditions of religion are satisfied.

But note well the words which the poet uses,—and I dwell thus upon the words because I really believe that they describe the experience of a vast number of people who have discarded any formal belief in God—note well the words, I say: "a voice of gladness," "a healing sympathy." These terms are not material. There can be glad-

ness only where there is sentiency: there can be sympathy only where there is sentiency. If you doubt my statement, or fail to comprehend its meaning, take a brick; fix your thoughts upon it as a brick, and nothing but a brick; and see if it gives forth any "voice of gladness," or any "healing sympathy." By such an experiment, you would confine your view of Nature strictly within material limits, and wherever you shall so confine yourself, you will find that she can utter no voice of gladness, and administer no healing sympathy.

To illustrate this point still further, take an old historic building, or an old heirloom. Such things speak to us. They have a measure of personality. They have associations which sway the human heart beyond words to tell. In the midst of a seething human mass, within the storied walls of Faneuil Hall, Wendell Phillips reached the climax of one of the greatest orations the slavery conflict called forth when he exclaimed: "For the sentiments which this advocate of slavery has uttered, on soil consecrated by the prayers of Puritans and the blood of patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up." Who can doubt that the deafening tumult which followed those words, was more a response to the thousand voices which spoke from the hallowed walls wherein they stood than from the voice of the orator? To thus personify a building; to enlist the very earth itself as a sentient force in that hour of strife, was a masterly stroke of oratory. But for us at the present moment, its chief significance lies in the fact, that those walls, that earth, would have remained absolutely without influence had not the genius of the young orator invested them with personality. By thus investing them he enlisted on his side not alone history but also Nature. Said Jesus upon one occasion: "Had I not done as I did, the very stones in the streets would have cried out." Wendell Phillips made the earth cry out that night for freedom, and by so doing he reinforced his own feeble utterance by an impulse from the Infinite.

But now a strong protest can be raised against my argument. To go back to the first illustration, it will be said, that while Burns' poem delights us, it does not persuade us that the daisy is either cheerful, or brave, or modest. The poet simply thrusts these virtuous qualities upon the flower, and so gives it a fictitious value. Likewise it can be said in regard to Wendell Phillips' speech, that the earth didn't yawn at the call of freedom that night, and as far as we know never will so yawn. Yes, these things can be said, and truly said. But yet, people will go on loving Burns' poem, and yielding to Phillips' method. How shall we reconcile this seeming contradiction? By recognizing that both poem and speech imply more than they express. They imply that at bottom there is tenderness, cheer, justice in the universe. They declare that to construe the universe in terms applicable to a brick only, would be a misconception. They signify that however it may be in regard to a particular flower, or a particular spot of earth, there is sentiency in the universe as a whole.

They proclaim that when you have passed beyond relations to your fellowmen you have not passed beyond an object of love and trust and obedience, but that the universe itself is such an object since it is more than mere matter at rest or in motion.

Now, friends, I think there is no escape from the conclusion that we must either look upon the universe as a play of soulless forces, or we must regard it as an expression of spiritual qualities as Burns suggests in his poem. And in making up our minds upon this point, we should not deceive ourselves. We should not, for instance, say we disbelieve in God, and then ascribe all the essential qualities of God to Nature. Furthermore we should not disavow our need of religion, while we find our

chief delight in books which breathe the religious sentiment in unconventional forms. Nor should we declare that morality need borrow no sanctions from religion, while we yet make our most earnest appeal to those very sanctions, though we do so unconsciously.

You will not misunderstand me on this point. I have no desire to erect a great man-God, sitting in some heavenly place, whom we must picture to ourselves and bow down before. I believe in no such God. My instincts cry out against it. I sympathize with the author of Job when he asks: "Canst thou by searching find out God?" The familiar way in which revivalists and other preachers often speak of God is excessively repugnant to me. I go rather with the philosophers who humbly confess that the human faculties cannot compass an adequate conception of Deity. I believe that in a profound sense God is unknown and unknowable. Whatever he may be, I firmly believe that he is infinitely grander than anything which even humanity can symbolize. I rejoice in those utterances which restrain us from making God in our own image,—reminding us that we are finite, that He, whatever He may be, is infinite, surpassing conception, surpassing speech.

But while thus regarding this "Power, not ourselves," I yet perceive clearly that if we speak of it at all, we must inevitably do so in one of two sets of terms —either in those pertaining to matter, or in those pertaining to mind. Which, I ask, is likelier to approach near the truth —the highest or the lowest terms? See you not you must choose here? You cannot escape the decision by declining to speak, for think and speak of the "Power not ourselves" you must. If you believe that terms strictly applicable to matter and to matter alone will better express the impression the universe makes upon you, then use them. But if that be your decision, beware that you use them and them alone. Do not smuggle in spiritual terms: do not deny the hours when unpremeditatedly you have found "healing sympathy" in nature and listened to her "voice of gladness." To do so is to deny God in a most serious and solemn sense, for it is giving a wrong report of your deepest experience. You should make sure here what you yourself really think and feel, and heed not what you can or cannot say in the superficial language of creed or conversation.

But you will ask me to state explicitly what I mean by material terms. This statement, of course, I cannot make exhaustive. But I can indicate my thought by saying that if you are a thorough-going materialist you should not speak of Nature as contriving, planning, aiming, arranging, as scientists do continually speak. You should never think of her as kindly, or joyous, or buoyant. You should discontinue such expressions as laughing waters, murmuring leaves, sportive waves. You should renounce the idea of an avenging time, of a cruel fate, of a guiding providence. Even in using such terms as majesty, awfulness, sublimity, grandeur, you must carefully search your heart lest you allow the words to take on a spiritual implication. When you have carefully pruned your language in the manner thus indicated, only more thoroughly, you will find it closely approaching the bareness of technical phraseology. The subtlest sources of oratory will be lost to you; the field of poetry will be severely restricted; the delights of out-of-door life will be decidedly lessened; the scope for religion largely surrendered. But on the other hand if you hold that Nature in her highest aspects can only be fittingly described in terms pertaining to mind, then every capacity for companionableness in your being will find exercise in your relations to this "power not ourselves."

The tender sentiments of Burns will then be normal to you; the healing sympathy which visited Bryant will visit you; the emotions which made Phillips feel that the earth should yawn and swallow up the

defender of injustice, you will feel. And in all these experiences, should they come to you, you will but assert that nature by a thousand voices proclaims that whatever sentiency or personality man possesses she overmatches.

That danger lies in this direction I admit. The attempt to personify nature has led to fetishism, mythology, idolatry, and it fills the churches to-day with puerile and absurd talk of God and heaven. In short it demands of the human imagination more than that imagination is equal to. For the moment you speak of the universe as at bottom spiritual; the moment you declare that this "Power not ourselves" is personal, a demand is made for a picture, an image of this person. But any attempt to picture God to ourselves will prove futile. We shall get only a massive and sublimed human body. But of all absurd ideas the absurdest is to suppose that the infinite person of God can be encased in anything like the body of man. Even our body is not our person. Our personality indeed takes expression through our body, and since ours is the highest form of finite personality, it is not strange that we should be prone to imagine that God is embodied like unto us. But against such imagery every great religious teacher has warned us. I know we shall not heed the warning. The demands of the imagination are too urgent. It will press us to frame a picture of God, even though the attempt lead to nought—or to worse than nought—to vain idols of the imagination.

When people say they do not believe in the personality of God, I suspect they often mean that they do not believe in His bodily, if I may be allowed the word. They may rejoice to feel that all things are working together for good; that development goes forward to some reasonable end; that in the fields and woods there is "a presence which disturbs with the joy of elevated thoughts." To them the universe is really sentient. They would not endure to bring their thought and feeling within the limit of material terms. They have more sympathy for the language of Burns than the language of Gray. Were they compelled to choose between the phraseology of the Psalms, and the phraseology of strict scientific books as an expression of their deepest convictions, they would keep the Psalms and let go their manuals. While regretting the falsity that flows from ascribing to God anything like the parts and passions of men, they would exclaim, let us not surrender the thought that the Lord is merciful and just; that he "pitith as a Father;" that "he remembereth our frame;" that "though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death his rod and his staff will comfort us;" that "his voice has gone out throughout the earth;" that whithersoever we go, his spirit is there.

I am aware, friends, that this sermon will scarcely be satisfactory to all. For one thing it will not satisfy the imagination of some. Had I spoken of the heavenly home with the ineffable God seated amid a blaze of unapproachable glory with his attendant angels singing his praise, I should have spoken in a strain that has comforted men for long centuries. But that is not the only comforting strain. Had Jesus any such a picture in mind when he said to the Samaritan woman that God is spirit? Had Paul when he declared unto the Athenians that "in him we live and move and have our being?" Had that ancient hymn of the Rig Veda when it sang of him, "through whom the sky is bright, and the earth firm, and the heaven is established?" Had Pythagoras when he exclaimed, "There is One Universal Soul diffused through all things: eternal, invisible, unchangeable?" Had Plato when he wrote that "God, the Sovereign Beauty, the Supreme Good, the Ruling Mind which orders all things and penetrates all things?" Had the poet, Schiller, when he sang:

"But God is a holy will that abides
Though the human will may falter;
High over both space and time it rides
The high thought that will never falter."

Here, then, is a goodly array of the greatest minds, and none of them attempt to picture God,—rather they cleave fast to the conviction that He is unpicturable Spirit, infinite Mind, of whom no idol or image can be made. And, yet, these very persons were among the most deeply religious whom the world has known, and to them God was very God, and to their hearts how dear was the thought of him "peopling the lonely places, effacing the scars of our mistakes and disappointments!"

If we will cease being idolaters, imaginers, of God, and surrender ourselves to the sense of His presence which flows in upon us amid the glories of nature or from the still small voice of the conscience, He may become to us as certain a fact, as soothing and as sustaining an idea as to the Psalmist who sang: "The Lord is my Shepherd I shall not want, He maketh me lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me by still waters; he restoreth my soul."

MAN'S MANY MINDS.

Agnosticism is, in essence, the neutral attitude of the mind toward the idea of a Creator. It represents a want of hope in the search for the First Intelligence. All thinking men have been seekers after God as though longing to see more clearly; the agnostic is that type of mind that, to a greater or less degree, has given up the inquiry. In a few persons it is akin to atheism; in most minds it is only a condition of doubt.

The pulpit and the church advocates in general do not possess any arguments that can overthrow this special form of disbelief. All that the friends of Christianity and religion can do is to fit their plea to the new form of the case in court—a case new in its subject matter, its surroundings, and its adherents.

From the nature of the age which sees more clearly than former times into logical relations, much that was once debated falls away from the argument now as being irrelevant. In the times of Paine and Hume it was thought a very radical inquiry to ask whether the biblical history was a record of actual occurrences. It was infidelity to suppose that the sun did not stand still at the request of Joshua; but that form of disbelief is found now to live in perfect harmony with a deep faith in the divine offices of Christ. Thus hundreds of beliefs which seemed so vital a half-hundred years ago are now thought to be of no moment; curious rather than harmful. Reason has become so strengthened by use that it has at last learned in what field its labors are only wasted and in what fields it can toil with most hope of a harvest.

The human mind and heart remain the same, only the stumbling blocks have been changed. The path of faith, like a certain other path, has never run smoothly. Once the heart said: "Only help me over this difficulty about the 'ark,' and 'Jonah,' and Daniel, and I will join your church;" but as rapidly as an age picks up the stones of stumbling in the way, other objects fall into the road from the sky, or are squeezed up and out of the ground, and the new traveler finds a new obstacle in his progress.

Under the changing phases of belief and disbelief, there is always the same human heart, a heart always halting between two opinions, and always ready to be led forward toward a more comforting faith. The word "agnosticism" need not alarm the teachers of Christianity because it has many degrees of quality, and many of those degrees differ but little from a Christian hope and trust.

If agnosticism is growing to be the prevailing shape of disbelief it will find its greatest enemy in such an application of Christianity to society as will make an ethics without a God seem unfitted to be the basis of a world. In

Germany and in many spots where agnosticism flourishes it easily turns into pessimism, and like old asceticism belittles the career of man; and, therefore, the best answer to it will always be found in the higher manhood, art, literature and joyfulness that may issue from the religious philosophy applied in its greatness to the race.

Much of disbelief has come from the spectacle of the Bible applied in its littleness, if it can have such a quality. Its sublime ideas were often fettered by some obscure text; and as the planets and great suns of Galileo had to obey the little text in the Old Testament about the sun's stopping, so the divine idea of liberty was fettered by the slaves of a few misguided patriarchs, and the whole sermon on the Mount had to wait hundreds of years for the death of some laws Moses had passed for the regulation of semi-barbarians. It was the reign of the lesser texts of the Bible that made Christian gnosticism, or Christian knowledge, so little attractive to the reason of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. If that was Christian knowledge we cannot blame the world for preferring to be ignorant. But should Christianity in its true Christlike greatness ever roll forth from all the pulpits and express itself in the public and private life of its votaries, agnosticism will have to confess the value of such a form of knowledge and faith.—*David Swing.*

Correspondence.

THE NEW YORK LEAGUE.

On the first Friday in May was held the last meeting, for this season, of the New York League of Unitarian Women. As in the previous year, this second annual meeting convened at Yonkers.

The morning session was devoted to the reading of the reports of the Secretary, Treasurer and church auxiliaries; the election of officers and other business. These usual dry-as-dust proceedings teemed with interest to those present. The Recording Secretary noted that the New York League had had no childhood, having reached maturity after two years' growth. With an active membership of over 550; with an average attendance of 418 at its meetings; with strength and vigor visibly stamped upon its successful co-operation, the New York League had rushed from incipiency to a useful prime.

The election of officers resulted in a change of President and first Vice-President in their respective positions, Mrs. J. T. Morse replacing Mrs. Theodore C. Williams. Mrs. Williams had declined serving another term as President. Unfortunately for the League, it lay within her power to relieve herself of the care and responsibility of the office. It is not within her power to banish the affectionate remembrance of her skill and tactful kindness as presiding officer. Mrs. Morse is an able successor. In welcoming her to the post of honor, Mrs. Williams dwelt upon the remarkable freedom of the League from jealousy, small ambitions and dissensions, tracing the cause to the love of noble ideals and the earnestness of purpose that had animated the hearts of its members. She might have added, with justness, that the outcome of Unitarian principles is on a line with such a result.

A most interesting account of the aims and objects of the Woman's Western Unitarian Conference, sent by its President, was then read by the League's Secretary. It awoke in Eastern hearts cordial feelings of interest and an increased confidence that, east and west, Unitarians are more than ever, "parts of one stupendous whole." Mrs. Williams was unanimously elected delegate to the coming Western Conference.

The afternoon session opened with a report of the Religious News Committee and the Philanthropic Committee. The one stirred Unitarian

pride in the work on foot among their numbers throughout the country; the other roused equal interest in a charitable work on the other side of the ocean,—the Cheyne Walk Hospital,—which was shown to be a home, as well as a hospital, to the crippled children who entered its wards.

The first question for discussion,—"Physical conditions as affecting just views of life and duty," was ably handled by Mrs. Dr. Cushier. In her paper the inter-relation of brain and body was dwelt upon; the necessity for brain-education and brain-healthfulness emphasized, and the conclusion drawn, that as the brain was the center of all consciousness, so upon its normal condition depended the correctness of the impressions conveyed to it by the outside world.

The second paper was read by Mrs. F. W. Hooper, and embraced the following heads:—1. Can Christian fidelity and principle take a vacation? If so, how? 2. What should be the influence of the city church member on the country one with whom she is brought in contact? 3. What is our duty to the church in summer? This paper and the open discussion that followed impressed every woman present with the necessity of constant religious activity, whether in her own denomination or in the stranger—summer-church,—the tiny grain of mustard-seed full often blossoming, unawares, into the liberal tree. An earnest appeal was made for summer Unitarian services in the cities; it being suggested that some large room could be hired, such as the public schools offered, where during the summer months those who were in the city could gather for such worship or reading as might be found appropriate.

The meeting then adjourned.

M. A. B.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

EDITOR UNITY:

Our Sunday-school is doing finely. Parents, teachers and scholars, all take an interest in the work. The teachers' meetings are beneficial, and are well attended. The conference at Topeka thought the Sunday-school of no importance, and closed without any report as to what was being done, or what ought to be done, to make this branch of church-work more successful. Why is it that our Unitarian ministers think so little about the importance of teaching the children the true way? It was the same here at the conference, but little was said and nothing done to aid the willing workers in this line. We commenced with eleven scholars, and now we have one hundred and twenty-three, which, I believe, is the largest Unitarian Sunday-school in Kansas. If we would increase the numbers in our churches, more Sunday-school work must be done.

We feel that the First Unitarian church of Wichita is built upon the "rock," and ere long we hope to build the monument that shall show to the world that we are here to stay.

UNITY is fast becoming the paper, and many are the words of praise, given it and its editors. The copies received here are read and then handed to others to read. You all have our best wishes, and all the help we can give.

WICHITA, KANSAS, MAY 9, 1889.

J. L. S.

In the ordinary history of the soul the resolute effort to obey conscience, after a very little time brings with it a sense, first dim, then shining more to the perfect day, that there is (as Mr. Matthew Arnold says) "a Power not ourselves, which makes for Righteousness," or, in plainer revelation, that God watches and helps the soul which strives to do right.—Frances Power Cobbe.

THERE can be no meaner type of human selfishness than that afforded by him, who, unmindful of the world of sin and suffering about him, occupies himself in the pitiful business of saving his own soul in the very spirit of the miser, watching over his private hoard while his neighbors starve for lack of bread.—John G. Whittier.

Notes from the Field.

BOSTON.—An A. U. A. mission to China is suggested by a correspondent in the "Register." Possibly such a mission may in time blossom out of the present effort to introduce a liberal Christian faith into Japan.

The Boston Flower Mission now occupies rooms in the "Parker Memorial." The building will gradually be opened to similar charities or to industrial classes—probably not to regular Sunday religious services.

A good work is doing this spring, by the society to encourage window gardening, in giving to children pot plants and prizes for best results of their summer care, as well as a pamphlet list of names of wild and garden flowers, with rules for their cultivation.

—Dr. Joseph Tuckerman, minister-at-large in Boston from 1826 to 1840, all along advocated the offering by all churches of some good pews and seats at low rentals.

—Rev. J. H. Heywood has asked his parish in Melrose to accept his resignation, that he may remove to Louisville, Ky., the city of his first pastorate, the early home of Mrs. Heywood.

Delegates from Unity Clubs are invited to attend the annual meeting of the Unity Bureau on Thursday, May 30th, in Channing Hall. Reports of the year's work are solicited. These may be mailed to Mr. Fox, assistant secretary, A. U. A., 25 Beacon street.

—The Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of The Free Religious Association is to be held in Tremont Temple, Boston, on the 30th and 31st days of May. The business meeting on Thursday evening is for the hearing of reports, election of officers, etc. The Friday morning session will be devoted to the topic, "Religious Instruction and the Public Schools," addresses by M. J. Savage, Mrs. E. D. Cheney, T. W. Higginson, and others. The afternoon session will be given to the consideration of the question, "Nationalism or Socialism," the discussion to be opened by Edward Bellamy, author of "Looking Backward." At the Festival in the evening there will be a supper, speeches, music, and social opportunity, with Minot J. Savage to preside. The members of the Association and all interested in its work are reminded that the annual fees are now due. Annual members pay \$1.00; Patron members, \$5.00. Those who cannot attend the meeting can send their contributions to John C. Haynes, Treasurer, 451 Washington street, Boston, Mass.

CHICAGO.—The Unitarian Headquarters is thronged this week with delegates to the Western Conference. By Monday noon quite a number had already reported in season for the reception at All Souls church on Monday evening.

The pretty and homelike interior of All Souls church was rendered doubly attractive last Monday night by its adornment of flowers, attractively spread refreshment tables, and general atmosphere of light and cheer. The church-home throughout was hospitably thrown open by the pastor and his wife, that all interested to learn, might see what sort of a place a minister's home in a church would be. Both the guests and their entertainers, accepting the invitation, moved freely about, so that the crush of a large gathering was agreeably wanting and only the most cordial freedom and good fellowship prevailed. The delegations, though representing a wide stretch of territory, from New York City and Brooklyn to Sioux Falls, Dak., had not all arrived; but the pleasant hum of conversation, the shining eyes and low ripples of laughter that greeted one everywhere, bespoke emphatically the spirit of the gathering. Delegates from Iowa and New York, Indiana and Dakota, Illinois and Missouri, Minnesota and Kansas, mingled in pleasant confusion, the general feeling being one of enjoyment of the present moment and joyful anticipations for

the Conference session, so happily begun. The two oldest settled Unitarian pastors in the West were seen shaking hands, in gay dispute for the honor of age. The various woman ministers of the further West were noted here and there; also the large lay delegation from Iowa, the representatives of the New York League, and many others whom we cannot now mention in full. In spite of the fatigues incident to long journeys by rail, the delegates and friends lingered until a late hour, and after partaking of a delicate collation, prepared by the hospitable ladies of All Souls, separated until the morrow, apparently well satisfied with the evening's entertainment.

THE IOWA CONFERENCE.—It was a privilege to be present at the Iowa State Conference, May 5-8. The dedication of the Church on Sunday drew together a large audience, overflowing into the gallery. The sermon by Mr. Jones, the reading of Scripture, old and new, by Miss Murdock, the prayer by Mr. Hunting, the responsive service, led by the pastor Miss Safford, and the singing of the hymn of dedication, made the occasion one long to be remembered. In the evening the beautiful church was again crowded, and several addresses were delivered on "The Liberal Church; Its Educational Work," Rev. Arthur Beavis; "Its Missionary Work," Rev. E. T. Wilkes; "Its Worship," Rev. J. R. Effinger; "Its Future," Rev. J. Ll. Jones. The following is the dedicatory hymn by Miss Safford.

Great Over-Soul and Inter-Heart,
Of whom we feel ourselves a part,
To whom all souls forever tend,
Our Father, Mother, nearest Friend:

This church, with love, to thee we bring,
And while our spirits only sing,
We pray that it may ever be
A Home for all who seek for thee.

The home of faith in all things true,
A faith that seeks the larger view,
The home of love that yearns to bless,
The home of truth and righteousness.

Long may it stand, the outward sign
Of that indwelling Life divine
Which makes thy children truly free,
And draws them ever nearer thee.

BLACK RIVER FALLS, Wis.—The Wisconsin Conference of Unitarian and other liberal societies was opened Tuesday evening, May 6, with Scripture reading and prayer, by Rev. W. F. Greenman, of Winona. The Conference sermon was delivered by Rev. T. B. Forbush, of Milwaukee. Eighteen delegates were in attendance. Papers were read by Rev. N. C. Earle, of Chippewa Falls; Rev. G. W. Buckley, Monroe; Rev. Walter F. Greenman, of Winona; and Rev. A. N. Somers, of Fort Atkinson. Rev. H. D. Maxson preached a sermon on "What must I do to be saved?" The closing sermon was by Rev. J. H. Crooker, on "Our Position and Purpose."

JAMESTOWN, N. Y.—Rev. Henry Frank has been preaching on the infallible inspiration of the Bible. In concluding his sermon, reported at length in a local paper, he said:—"The true explanation of the Bible will only be found when it is accepted as a national literature, revealing the deepest thoughts of a serious people, and oftentimes voicing sentiments which may truly be said to be inspired by the thrill of a divine afflatus, but only inspired as all men may be inspired who will place themselves in the temple of truth and become ministers of love and mercy."

GENEVA, ILL.—Rev. J. B. Frost was here Sunday, May 5th, and gave an excellent sermon on "Religion Defined." There were three other clergymen in the congregation, and many remarked that it was a good sermon for both clergy and laity, and would make a good paper for one of the Conference sessions. The pastor, Mr. Byrnes, on invitation by the G. A. R. Post, gave the address on centennial evening.

JANESVILLE, Wis.—Rev. E. B. Payne, of Leominster, Mass., is in Chicago this week attending the West-

ern Unitarian Conference. He preached at Janesville May 5 and 12.

LA PORTE, IND.—The Unitarian church observed the centennial of Washington's inauguration yesterday. The church was elaborately decorated, the music, both vocal and instrumental, was very choice, and the pastor fairly outdid himself in his able and patriotic address. A large congregation was present.

HINSDALE, ILL.—Rev. J. B. Frost, of Alton, preached in Hinsdale on Sunday, May 12.

The Newest Books.

Ethical Religion. By William Macintire Salter. Boston: Roberts Brothers. Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co. Cloth, 16mo, pp. 332. Retail \$1.50, net \$1.20, postage 10 cents.

Emerson in Concord. A memoir written for the "Social Circle" in Concord, Mass., by Edward Waldo Emerson, Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Cloth, 12mo, pp. 266. Retail \$1.75, net \$1.35, postage 10 cents.

The Story of William and Lucy Smith. Edited by George S. Merriam. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. Cloth, 12mo, pp. 666. Retail \$2.00, net \$1.50, postage 15 cents.

Revelation. By Isaac M. Atwood, D. D. Boston: Universalist Publishing House. Cloth, 16mo, pp. 90, 25 cents.

Living Questions: Studies in Nature and Grace. By Warren Hathaway. New York: Fords, Howard & Hulbert. Chicago: S. A. Maxwell & Co. Cloth, 12mo, pp. 366, \$1.25.

Optimism: or the Bright Side of Life. By Aurelius. Chicago: The Bright Side Publishing Co. Paper, square 12mo, pp. 48. 25 cents.

RECEIPTS OF THE W. U. O.

Additional amounts received by Treasurer of the Conference for year 1888-9.
1889.

May 10.	Mrs. F. C. Loomis, All Souls Church	\$ 5 00
" "	David Utter, for Unitarian Church, Hobart, Ind.	10 00
" "	Mrs. Dean Bangs, All Souls Church	5 00
" "	A. E. Clark, Warren, Ill.	5 00
" "	Jas. M. Wanzer, Third Church, Chicago	40 00
" "	Jay Belknap, LaPorte, Ind., Annual membership	1 00
" "	Dr. Wm. R. Smith, Sioux City, Iowa	35 00
" "	Rev. A. W. Gould, Manistee, Mich., annual membership	1 00
" "	Unity Church, Monmouth, Ill. by Rev. O. B. Beals	10 00
" "	Miss Rebecca Rice, Unity Church, Chicago	1 00
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Persons in sympathy with the work of the National Woman Suffrage Association—Elizabeth Cady Stanton, president; Susan B. Anthony, vice-president—will find it, as also all official announcements, duly recorded in the WOMAN'S TRIBUNE. Every person interested in the effort to obtain political, legal and industrial equality for women should become subscribers. Readers are invited to send items of news and names for sample copies.

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IMPORTANT WORKS

Published by THE OPEN COURT Publishing Co., Box F, 169-175 LaSalle st., Chicago. Three Introductory Lectures on the Science of Thought.

By F. Max Muller. 75 cents. This work of the eminent philologist has evoked much criticism.

The Psychic Life of Micro-Organisms. A Study in Experimental Psychology. By Alfred Binet, of Paris, France. Cloth 75c.; paper 50c.

In a preface written especially for the American edition, Prof. George J. Romanes, that the first appearance of the various psychical and intellectual faculties is assignable to different stages in the scale of zoological development.

The Idea of God. By Dr. Paul Carus. 15c. Being a disquisition upon the development of the idea of God in human thought and history.

JUST APPEARED.

FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEMS. The Method of Philosophy as a Systematic Arrangement of Knowledge. By DR. PAUL CARUS. Price \$1.00.

From the principle of positivism indicated in the title, the author discusses the most vital questions of philosophy and ethics. Among them the problems of Formal Thought (Kant's *a priori*) Causality; of the Origin of Life; of Absolute Existence; of Space and Time; of Infinitude and Eternity; Free Will; Ethics and Natural Science; the Importance of Art.

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The Home.

A TRAVELER FROM THE SOUTH.

Up from the South a traveler comes
All in a dust of gold,
And the lading of his chariot
You shortly shall behold.

Rich are the treasures that he brings—
Green banners to the trees,
Soft fringes to the willow boughs,
And honey to the bees.

A crowd of little curled-up ferns
To the bare, windy woods;
Soft dyes for pretty budding flowers,
And baby birds in broods.

He throws into the meadow's lap
Rosettes of yellow silk,
And daisy-disks set round with whorls
Of petals white as milk.

He folds green velvet o'er the earth
In many a loop and twist,
Then binds the lovely sweeping robe
With belts of amethyst.

He tips with tassels alder-boughs
Along the pasture rills,
And by the mossy garden walls
Leaves row of daffodils.

He brings a load of lilac plumes,
And sets the earth aglow
With tulip-cups from whence a stream
Of gorgeous colors flow.

Ah! though I wrote both night and day
All through the circling year,
I could not name the lovely gifts
Brought by this chariooer.

—M. F. Butts, in
Christian Union.

THE MONK, BASLE.

The following legend beautifully illustrates the value of cheerfulness.

"It is related of the monk Basle that, being excommunicated by the Pope, he was, at his death, sent in charge of an angel to find a fit place of suffering in hell. But such was the eloquence and good humor of the monk, that wherever he went he was received gladly, and civilly treated even by the most uncivil angels; and when he came to discourse with them, instead of contradicting him or forcing him, they took his part and adopted his manners, and even good angels came from afar to see him, and took up their abode with him.

"The angel that was sent to find a place of torment for him, attempted to remove him to a worse pit but with no better success, for such was the contented spirit of the monk that he found something to praise in every place, and company, though in hell, and made heaven of it.

"At last the escorting angel returned with his prisoner to them that sent him saying that no phlegethon could be found that would burn him, for that in whatever condition, Basle remained incorrigibly Basle."

The legend says his sentence was remitted and he was allowed to go into heaven, and was canonized as a saint.

A YOUNG NATURALIST.

There is a boy in Atlanta, Ga., who, according to what we hear, spends his afternoons and all his spare time in foraging in the country for bugs and lizards. Every morning he takes in his pockets to school the results of his last raid. The specimens of insectiferous and reptilian life that he can fish up from the depths of his trousers pockets are many and varied, and awful to touch and look at. Recently the teacher took an inventory of the bugs and other animals found in his pockets, or that escaped therefrom and terrified the other children—and the teacher. There were several varieties of beetles, pigeons with broken wings, English sparrows, butterflies, devilhorses, slugs, snails, earthworms, lizards, a snake or two, and an occasional frog, damp and cold. One day he slyly opened the flap of his pocket, and then went on in his hard, resolute effort to make his teacher think he was studying. After a while the teacher noticed a grasshopper hopping agilely from desk to desk, and the titter and tee-hee of the scholars. A chase was begun, when another grasshopper was seen; then another, and they were everywhere hopping all over the room and sticking their sharp

feet in the little girls' hair, frightening them half to death. "Come here!" shouted the teacher to the tender lover of insects, as she reached for her ferule. "Give me your hand, sir." The naturalist held out his hand as if he was a martyr to science. The teacher was about to seize, when she caught sight of two green eyes that flashed at her from the boy's hand, and a sharp forked tongue that seemed to dart into her face. The boy had a snake coiled around his arm. He was not feruled, and an Atlanta paper says that the teacher has not felt very well since that day.

Not many children show at so early an age so decided preferences, but when they do, if they have even average abilities, great things may be expected of them—if they are properly educated. It makes no difference how strong natural tendencies are, they must not be permitted to grow up uneducated. Some children grow up almost as wild as Indians, others have all their native forces "educated" out of them. The golden mean is the true way.—*School Journal*.

CHICAGO CALENDAR.

CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH, corner Michigan avenue and Twenty-third street. David Utter, minister. Sunday services at 11 A. M.

UNITY CHURCH, corner Dearborn avenue and Walton place. Thomas G. Milsted, minister. Sunday services at 10:45 A. M.

THIRD UNITARIAN CHURCH, corner Monroe and Laflin streets. James Vila Blake, minister. Sunday services at 10:45 A. M.

ALL SOULS CHURCH, corner Oakwood boulevard and Langley avenue. Sunday, May 19, services at 11 A. M. The pastor, Jenkins Lloyd Jones, will speak.

UNITY CHURCH, HINSDALE. Sunday services at 10:45 A. M. William C. Gannett will speak.

KENWOOD CHAPEL, corner Lake avenue and Forty-fifth street; service at 8 P. M. Jenkins Lloyd Jones will speak.

Worth Imitating.

The warm season brings its usual demand for more hours for relaxation by the busy workers in the hives of commerce. Some of our largest houses recognize its justice and readily arrange for the comfort of their employees. One of the first of these was the firm of PITKIN & BROOKS, corner of State and Lake Streets, who close their handsome establishment at 1 o'clock on Saturday, during May, June, July and August. At all other times their rooms are open to the inspection of visitors who are at liberty to examine their large lines of crockery and glassware from the most famous factories of the world. This house is justly noted for its taste and enterprise. Customers are requested to note the course adopted and arrange their visits accordingly.

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Mr. Bixby's book has seemed to us the best of its kind.—*The Christian Union*.

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with a woman." We almost forget this saying when we hear of a housekeeper who hasn't sense enough to use

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Dentists to clean false teeth. Engineers to clean parts of machines. Housemaids to scrub the marble floors. Painters to clean off surfaces. Surgeons to polish their instruments. Ministers to renovate old chapels. Chemists to remove some stains. Soldiers to brighten their arms. Confectioners to scour their pans. Sextons to clean the tombstones. Carvers to sharpen their knives. Artists to clean their palettes. Mechanics to brighten their tools. Hostlers on brasses and white horses. Shrewd ones to scour old straw hats. Cooks to clean the kitchen sink.

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—we want one person in each
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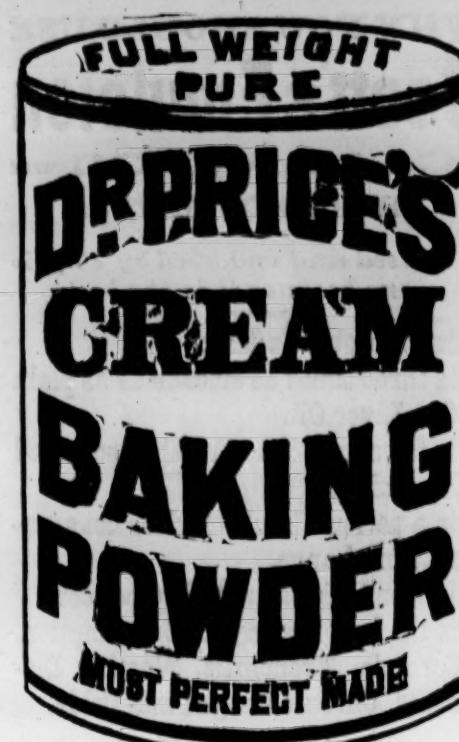
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